9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

ago. I kicked at one of them and a gray lizard ran out, straight 222
and fast as an arrow. Then it turned around and ran back in again, having no place else to go.

Soon Twikwe found a third root and, after digging it out and tasting it, found it quite acceptable; putting it in her kaross, she went on to find a fourth. We found old, dry holes where Bushman women had dug out roots seasons ago, a few dry vines with bitter, useless roots below, and three more roots that proved to be edible, as well as two more melons, a few spiny cucumbers, a handful of berries from a tiny bush, and one more truffle. This would feed Twikwe and her two sons for one or two days, or perhaps would be shared with Ukwane and Kutera because Kutera, that day, had not [476] felt well enough to gather food of her own. Bushmen help each other, each Bushman woman contributing to the support of her own family and perhaps to the well-being of some very old people as well.

When Twikwe considered that she had enough, we turned back to find the others, and presently we came to the plain where we had left them. Twikwe called, and was answered by three or four voices very near by. Then, right in front of us as if from nowhere, the three boys, Tsetchwe, and Dasina appeared standing, having been crouching in the long grass. Twikwe and I joined them, and the Bushmen passed Twikwe's pipe, the short, wide antelope bone stuffed with tobacco. When it was passed to me I puffed it, too, but it was so strong and rank that it made me dizzy.

Soon we heard a wail, a sad crying out in the veld, and it was Gai and John returning with Nhwakwe, who had begun to miss his mother or want to go home. Gai looked cross and walked rapidly with his little burden riding on his shoulder, and even John seemed somewhat annoyed because of the noise and because they had not found a bi root. When they

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
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Kung

the wind or passing feet had disarranged them; and the meat that resulted from his prolific hunting was never wasted, for he would bring other hunters to help him dry it, then carry it off to a werf somewhere to share with others.

He knew the habits of animals from the ways of the largest antelope all the way down to the smallest species of mice; in fact, he must have known animals very well, for he could always find them. He knew when he was in danger and when he was safe, and he was as brave as he was careful. Once, Short Kwi, John, and two other hunters were tracking a bull wildebeest that one of the hunters had shot. They came upon it lying down, surrounded by a very large pride of lions. There were twenty or thirty lions in all, having got there first and claiming the wildebeest as their own, for the bushes were full of lions walking back and forth, watching several other lions brave the fallen wildebeest, still able to protect itself with its horns. The braver lions were standing near the wildebeest, obviously steeling themselves for the attack, when the hunters arrived. The Bushmen had followed the wildebeest's trail through thorns and over the parching desert and were not to be deprived, and, speaking softly to the lions, they said: "We know you are strong, Big Lions, we know you are brave, but this meat is ours and you must give it back to us."

Even after these words the lions did not give ground. Their round eyes watched the hunters and they began to growl, and the four men, quite unarmed except for their arrows and a spear (to use a spear would have been folly), said respectfully: "Great Lions, Old Lions, this meat belongs to us," and then advanced on the lions, throwing little stones and clods of dirt. The lions in the bushes began to back away, while the braver lions stood their ground until a clod struck one of them, causing him to huff and run back a little. At this, the courage of the other lions broke and they all turned and

12: Marshall E-5 (1951-1959) 1961 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

516 uproarious, derisive laughter. All this is joking and one should not take offence.
[522] The /Kung say this teaches young persons to keep their tempers.

In contrast to the joking is their care in other aspects of conduct to avoid giving offence. ≠Toma said, for instance, that, if he were forming a hunting party and a man whom he did not want asked to join him, he would be careful to refuse indirectly by making some excuse and try not to offend the man.

521 Gossip which can stir up trouble is discouraged. People do gossip but usually
518 discreetly, in low voices, with near and trusted relatives and friends. It is best to mind one's own business, they say.

People are expected to control their tempers and do so to a remarkable degree.
157 If they are angry, aggrieved, or frustrated, they tend to mope rather than to become
518 aggressive, expressing their feelings in low mutters to their close relatives and friends.
626 ≠Toma told us that he had lost his temper twice when he was a young man and on one occasion had knocked his father down. On the other he had pushed his wife into hot ashes. It had so frightened him to realize that he could lose control of himself and behave in this violent way that, he said, he had not lost his temper since.

Meat-sharing

224 The /Kung custom of sharing meat helps to keep stress and hostility over food at
● 416 a low intensity. The practical value of using up the meat when it is fresh is obvious to
518 all and the /Kung are fully aware of the enormous social value of the custom. The fear of hunger is mitigated; the person one shares with will share in turn when he gets meat and people are sustained by a web of mutual obligation. If there is hunger, it is commonly shared. There are no distinct haves and have-nots. One is not alone.

To have a concept of the potential stress and jealousy which meat-sharing mitigates in /Kung society one has only to imagine one family eating meat and others not when they are settled only five or ten feet apart in a firelit werf and there are no walls for privacy. The veld does not hide secret killing and eating because actions are printed in its sands for all to read. The idea of eating alone and not sharing is shocking to the /Kung. It makes them shriek with an uneasy laughter. Lions could do that, they say, not men.

224 The custom of meat-sharing applies only to the big game animals. Small animals the size of duikers or smaller, birds, tortoises, lizards, grasshoppers, snakes, and ostrich eggs are picked up incidentally and belong to the person who shoots, snares, finds or catches them. He may keep these for himself and his immediate family and may share them as he chooses, as if they were veldkos. ≠Toma says that, if there is only a little, he and his family eat a meal and give a little to anyone who happens to be near by at the time.

Meat-sharing applies to the big animals which are deliberately hunted by organized hunting parties. In the Nyae Nyae region they are kudu, gemsbok, wildebeest, hartebeest, springbok, warthogs and ostrich. Eland are found less commonly and buffalo rarely. The Nyae Nyae hunters managed to shoot giraffe occasionally. Giraffe are royal game by S.W.A. law, but the Nyae Nyae /Kung had not known this. When they were told, they called them ' Morrisi cows'. (Mr. Robert Morris was the Commissioner of Native Affairs at Runtu.)

The system by which meat is shared begins with the hunters, but the composition